



## Maine Connections

March 2010

### Greetings!

Greetings from DECD!

It's been exciting to watch our Maine Olympians competing in the Vancouver Olympics this year and they fill me with a sense of pride. I think Olympians like Seth Wescott and Julia Clukey are representative of many Mainers: hard-working and passionate about their jobs. Other athletes who have trained in Maine seem to have left our state with some of these inherent qualities we often take for granted, too. Even New Hampshire's Bode Miller trained at the Carrabassett Valley Academy which played a key role on his path to winning Gold. I believe Maine, with its unique quality of place, and people who are enthusiastic and caring, is a special place and watching these superior athletes reminds me of how proud I am to work and live in this state and share it with good, down-to-earth people. Even if there isn't an international opportunity to highlight all the aspects we love about Maine, we can all celebrate our state and our neighbor's successes together.



Thaxter R. Trafton

[www.businessinmaine.com](http://www.businessinmaine.com)

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## Maine Office of Tourism at the Travel Shows



The Maine Office of Tourism (MOT) just participated in the **New York Times Travel Show on February 26-28**. The show is the largest travel trade and consumer show in the United States, attracting over 500 exhibitors and 30,000 attendees. This year, along with Maine's traveling display pavilion which highlights the state's unique attractions, destinations and activities, there was a chance for attendees to meet an authentic Maine lobsterman.

MOT also had the pavilion at the **Boston Globe Travel Show** last week. Several thousand travelers attended the show during the weekend event. Traffic in the booth was very brisk and the literature from all the regions was well received by those attending the show. More than 500 people signed up for additional Maine information. The booth also focused on Maine's culture and heritage with demonstrations by a wooden snowshoe maker, lobsterman, artist and fiber arts spinner.

Photo: MOT's Pavilion at the Boston Globe Travel Show

## Androscoggin Valley Embraces Mobilize Maine *Discovery Workshop in Farmington a Success*

On February 23, business owners and community members of **Franklin County** gathered at U Maine-Farmington to brainstorm and **map the region's unique assets** to help establish long-term strategies for economic growth. Attendees were town managers, teachers, tourism professionals and health care workers, all coming together to help their community prosper. Hosted by Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), the event was part of the **Discovery Phase of the Mobilize Maine process**.

"Through asset mapping and action teams, we are making an effort to change the way things are done, *continuously*," said Robert Thompson, executive director of AVCOG. The goal of the workshop was for people to list the area's indigenous resources and stumble upon an "Aha!" moment.

One "Aha!" moment was when a University of Maine - Farmington employee shared that the one of the college's unique strengths is that they have **an excellent Chinese language program** and successful Chinese exchange program. With China playing a growing roll in business and trade, this asset is surely a marketable one.

If interested in participating in your region's Mobilize Maine process, contact your Economic Development District for more information.

Mobilize Maine is a private/public/nonprofit partnership facilitated by FairPoint's Connect Northern New England Community and Economic Development Initiative (CNNE), the Economic Development Districts and collaborative investors, like DECD.

## Maine Trade Day 2010 June 3, 2010

On June 3, 2010, the Maine International Trade Center (MITC) will host the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Maine International Trade Day 2010 in Rockport. Maine International Trade Day is the state's premier international business event with more than 250 leading professionals from Maine, New England, and Canada discussing the latest experiences, opportunities, and challenges for international trade.

This year's program, *Trade and Manufacturing - Strategies for Global Success* will feature Patricia Mears, Director of International Commercial Affairs at the National Association of Manufacturers; a manufacturer's panel on "Innovative Solutions for Challenging Times"; and the International Trade and Investment Awards for 2010.

To learn more about MITC's annual Trade Day, please call 207.541.7400 or e-mail [Tradeday2010@mitc.com](mailto:Tradeday2010@mitc.com), or visit [www.mitc.com](http://www.mitc.com).

## Block Grant Helps Farmers Fare to Grow

The Community Development Block Grant program recently issued **\$100,000 in Economic Development Program funds to the Town of Rockport** on behalf of Farmers Fare. The \$100,000 CDBG program award was critical to providing **Farmers Fare** with the working capital necessary to allow them to launch their specialty foods/private label product line while also meeting all of the regulatory and nutrition requirements for the USDA and FDA. The project will also **create 5 new full-time jobs** as a result of the investment.

Farmers Fare operates in a very competitive market that primarily consists of Knox County and a secondary trade area of Waldo and Lincoln Counties. As the "buy local" food movement continues to take hold, Farmers Fare has identified niches within the specialty foods sector which are considered both a challenge and an opportunity for success.



The Community Development Block Grant Program takes pride in its partnerships with Maine communities and businesses and wishes the Town of Rockport and Farmers Fare continued

success!

Photo: Peter Christie, Teri Thompson-Christie and Courtney of Farmers Fare with the CDBG check.

## **\$2.1 Million Awarded by MTI to Maine Companies Pioneering Innovations in Six Technology Sectors**

The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) Board of Directors approved recommendations for Development Awards to seven Maine companies pioneering innovations in six targeted technology areas. Awards were approved earlier to companies representing aquaculture and marine technology, biotechnology, composite technology, environmental technology, information technology and precision manufacturing. This 25<sup>th</sup> round of Development Awards totaled \$2,159,258 and leveraged over \$4.8 million in additional investment to the companies from other sources.

"MTI's Development Awards are direct investments in companies that are pioneering Maine's future through their technology innovations," explained Betsy Biemann, President of Maine Technology Institute, on the announcement of the awards. "These awardees are companies doing exceptional work on the front lines of managing the costs and risks of new product research and development that will enable them to grow and remain competitive in the global marketplace. As we support them in their aspirations, we help usher in a better economy for Maine. With every round of Development Awards we make, we see the promise of Maine's future."

MTI Development Awards of up to \$500,000 are offered three times a year on a competitive basis to support early activities for product development, commercialization, technology transfer and business planning and development. Each award requires a minimum 1:1 dollar match consisting of actual cash, salaries, staff time or equipment and in-kind contributions directly attributable to the proposed project. **The application deadline for the next round of awards is June 7, 2010.** MTI encourages technology start-ups, existing businesses and institutions to apply and offers support to interested companies on the application process. Workshops for companies interested in applying for Development Awards are being offered on March 31 and April 1 in Gardiner and Portland respectively.

### **Round 25 Development Award Recipients**

**Sea and Reef Aquaculture, LLC**  
**Pondera Pharmaceuticals, Inc**  
**Harbor Technologies, LLC**  
**Kenway Corporation**  
**ORPC Maine, LLC**  
**Kepware Technologies**  
**mWave Industries, LLC**

For more information, please visit the MTI website: [www.mainetechnology.org](http://www.mainetechnology.org).

## **Upcoming Events:**

### **Maine Restaurant Week - March 1-10**

**Restaurants across Maine are offering specially priced three-course meals.**

To see a complete list of participating restaurants, [click here](#)

## New England Products Trade Show

### **Don't Miss The 26th Annual NEPTS**

Save the date for our 26th Annual NEPTS at the Portland Sports Complex (The Dome) from March 13-15, 2010! For more info, [click here](#)